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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to present early adolescent Japanese boys' images that emerge from the counseling process through the use of sandplay and dreams. The author, an assistant professor of clinical psychology at the International Buddhist University in Japan, has made use of sandplay and dreams as a mediative method to understand and communicate with his clients. Sandplay therapy, founded by D.M. Kalff by adopting the idea of Analytical Psychology, is one of the effective methods to psycho-somatic disease using the body as mediation, especially Japanese youths who are generally weak in verbalization. The paper described their images in the form of 3 case studies with 3 similarities: 1) each case was a 12 year old male; 2) each male had a stomach ache; and 3) each male had school refusal tendencies. This paper discusses: 1) a therapist-client relationship in all three cases; 2) the common image characteristic symbolically representing the son-mother affective bonding in all 3 case studies; and 3) the physical complaint as an obstacle for the Japanese boys' adjustments. (JDM)

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Dependent / Independent Images Of The Early Adolescent Boys – Case Studies Through "Sandplay Technique" And Dream Work

By

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DEPENDENT/INDEPENDENT IMAGES OF THE EARLY ADOLESCENT BOYS - CASE STUDIES THROUGH "SANDPLAY TECHNIQUE" AND DREAM WORK-

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The author is an assistant professor of clinical psychology at International Buddhist University in Japan. He has been interested in the relation between clinical images and body-consciousness. He is a Ph.D. candidate and licensed clinical psychologist in Japan.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to present Japanese early adolescent boys' images, emerging from the counseling process with image methods (Sandplay and dream).The author has made use of them as a mediative method to understand and communicate with clients. Sandplay therapy, has been founded by Kalff,D.M. by adopting the idea of Analytical Psychology, is one of effective methods to psycho-somatic disease using body as mediation, especially to Japanese youths who are generally weak in verbalization. The author described their images in the form of 3 case studies: each case was 12 years old male, had a stomach ache and school refusal tendency. Then the author discussed as follows;

(1) On therapist-client relationship the therapist had a role of senior in Case 1, paternal in Case 2, maternal in Case 3.

(2) The common image characteristic of 3 cases symbolically represented the strength of son-mother affective bonding, making them dependent.

(3) The physical complaint as an obstacle for their adjustment led the therapist to a role, making them independent.

CASE PRESENTATION

Case 1.

(1) Outline of Case 1

Atusi(an assumed name, 12 years old, male) was in the first grade of junior high school. In summer vacation he caught cold. His temperature could not go down, so he went into hospital. When he was put in hospital, his fever went down, but when he tried to go to school, the fever went up. He came to the author to consult with his problem in the form of counseling. His chief complaints were fever, stomach ache, and school refusal tendency. While we had 16 sessions for 6 months, he made 15 sandplay images. First he showed his infantile omnipotence, then regressive images. When he was in his second grade, he became able to go to school without problems.

(2) Series of selected sandplay images

Sandplay 1 (#1): "Fighting."

Sandplay 2 (#2): "Extending construction of zoo." Atusi explained that on Sunday a family enjoyed in the zoo, but a mother with two babies left one alone.

Sandplay 9 (#9): "A scene of lakeside." He explained that at the water's edge a mother and babies were at their ease.

Sandplay 12 (#14): "Struggle against evil." He said that a hero struggled against evil from a town to protect a forest with animals.

Sandplay 13 (#14): "Putting down by a big deer."

In the last session #16 three cyclic images were made by him.

Play (#16): "Relationship between eating and being eaten."

Sandplay 14 (#16): "Relationship between shooting and being shot." He said that these relationships led to extinguish everything.

Sandplay 15 (#16): "Relationship between intervention and watching over." He

said that people on lower side of the circle said to the boy, "you must not do this and that," people on upraised of the circle said, "you'd better to do this and that." And Atusi added that a tourist on the opposite side of the boy was only swinging his hand, meaning "you are all right as you are."

Case 2.

(1)Outline of Case 2

Takeo(an assumed name, 12 years old, male) was in the first grade of junior high school. On the morning of the entrance ceremony for junior high school, his father went to a shop to take son's school uniform. On the way home back he fallen down and broke his legs. So he was hospitalized, then Takeo got angry and nervous. After this he became to have a stomach ache, loose bowels, nausea and violence against his mother. Takeo and the author had 9 sessions for 4 months.

Takeo had been frustrated by his parents. He felt his mother too interfering and his father incompetent. Five years ago the father had lost his mother (Takeo's grandmother) and been injured at work. Since then he became depressive and began taking medicine for depression. He had not been able to work. The author gave Takeo's mother consulting guidance about Takeo's feelings and needs. So he became ease and able to go to school.

After 3 years since then, he came back to my counseling room. Then he was 16yeas old, had given up senior high school because of his heart beating fast and his body unsteady. Takeo and the author had 6 sandplay sessions for 4 months. First he could not touch sand, but put toys on the sand, thereby became aware of his problem. Through this therapy he could be a member of a basketball team in his community and had a part-time job. From next year he has entered into a part-time high school.

(2)Series of sandplay images

Sandplay 1:"People in the countryside" revealed his family images.

Sandplay 2:"A safari park." There was no framework that gave a border and a way.

Sandplay 3:"Just before starting."

Sandplay 4:"A labyrinth." He said that he was unable to get a view of his way and future.

Sandplay 5:"A marathon." He said he was not there. He could not find his place in the community.

Sandplay 6: No title. He explained that there were man and wife lived in this tree-house and they welcomed two friends who visited them for pleasure.

Case 3.

(1) Outline of Case 3

Sinobu (an assumed name, 12 years old, male) was in the first grade of junior high school. He had a pain of his stomach for several months. By a medical checkup he was nothing wrong. Recently he suddenly felt an acute pain at night and had a school refusal tendency. He had come to see the author for counseling.

In our 3 months counseling, he had complained of a matter of unbalanced meal and mealtime, because his mother had been mentally confused for she had a money problem among relatives for several years. Also she had a persecuted anxiety and delusion, and she had not done housekeeping.

The author gave him an advice about how to manage and keep his balanced living, for example the way of living, meals, sleeping and so on. So he has become able to keep regular living, felt ease, and been able to go to school.

Four years later he came back to my counseling room. Then he was 16 years old, had given up senior high school because of his stomach ache. In our

counseling, he told many dream images for 2 years. Then he felt no pain and entered to a correspondence course in high school level.

(2) Series of selected dream images

Dream 1 :" At night I was in a lakeside hotel in the mountains, water in a pool and a lake suddenly moved in swirl and rose up as a waterspout. Thunder and lightning made me so fearful that I was unable to stand up and to run away." Sinobu said his impression that he was usually terrified and caught by cruel ideas.

Dream 2 :" I was waiting for a train with my mother on the platform. I saw a man in 20's had a knife and threatened passengers in a coming train. As I suddenly stood just before him, he stared at me and stabbed me with the knife in my forehead. I was covered with blood and stared back at him." Sinobu associated his cruel feeling to be alone and patient with his pain.

Dream 3 :"A young woman was freely riding a big horse in an open green meadow under the blue sky."

Dream 4 :"An old man in black clothes attacked me. I shot him but he got up again. I hit his face and he fell down. Then a brightly gold face appeared and said that the old man used to be a lion, it could not know good from evil so that its body was divided into halves, the good part became the gold face and the bad one became the old man." Sinobu said about this dream that he also could not tell good from evil.

Dream 5 :"An alien sat holding a baby. Suddenly the alien began to swallow and vomit the baby again and again " Sinobu associated this dream with his being in torture.

Dream 6 :"An American old psychologist and I met an American infant boy. He had a teddy bear. We asked him about his bear. He said 'nursing mother' or 'nothing mother'."

Dream 7 :"My mother came back home and gave me a lunch box with sandwich and spaghetti." Sinobu said about this dream that he felt so relieved because he could finally have a meal.

Dream 8 :"I was a counselor. There were two children. One was the elder sister and she was healthy. Another child was androgynous, the upper half of the body had a figure of girl with girl's face and the lower half of the body had a figure of boy with boy's face on its berry. This boy's face told me that his father did not give him even the kidney." Sinobu said about this dream that the boy's face was on the place where he had a pain.

Dream 9 :"I was caught by a boss of enemy and locked in the gas chamber. There were two supportive women. One gassed the boss and another led me into breathing in air."

Dream 10 :"A champion of a combative sport said to me that I was physically unable to fight in the top class but able to fight in the second class."

DISCUSSION

In case 1 Atusi represented his hero's images in sandplay, he wanted to have an ideal image of the younger. The author had a role of senior revealed as the tourist in sandplay 15(#16). In case 2 Takeo and his father both lost their way to express their feelings. The author told Takeo's mother their feelings. The author had a role of paternal to show them the way in the 'labyrinth'(sandplay 4). In Case 3 Sinobu was alone and confused. The author gave him an advice about how to manage his living. The author had a role of maternal like 'two supportive women' in dream 9.

The common image characteristic of 3 cases symbolically represented the strength of son-mother affective bonding, making them dependent. For Atusi in case 1, it was a turning point to express the regressive scene at 'the water's

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edge' in sandplay 9. For Takeo in case 2, his violence against his mother was independent struggle against mother's interfering. For Sinobu in case 3,the 'alien' in dream 5 was his image of mother. He needed to have maternal images like 'two supportive women' in dream 9.
When the client has physical complaints as mediation of his emotional conflict, he wants to satisfy his regressive needs in the passive form of dependence. If the therapist can play a mediative role between client's needs, he is going to represent his conflict with images instead of physical complaints. In case 1 Atusi represented his fever and stomach ache as 3 cyclic images in sandplay 15(#16), then the author played a senior role. In case 2 Takeo represented his body unsteady as the 'labyrinth'(sandplay 4), then the author told him the way and had a role of paternal. In Case 3 Sinobu represented his stomach ache as 'boy's face' in dream 8, then the author listened to him and had a role of maternal. The physical complaint as an obstacle for their adjustment led the therapist to a role, making them independent.

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